

## CLAIMS

1. A method for developing a plug-in, comprising:

incorporating an API in said plug-in, wherein said API enables said plug-in to be  
executed from a host application and data to be transmitted between said plug-in and said host  
5 application;

using said API to create a functional module wherein said functional module extends  
functionality of said host application; and

integrating said plug-in into said host application.

10 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said functional module is an executable launcher  
wherein said API allows said host application to launch executables via said executable launcher.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said executables are Java applets and JavaBean  
components.

15 4. The method of claim 1 wherein said plug-in is written in a platform independent  
programming language.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein said platform independent programming language  
is Java.

6. The method of claim 2 wherein said executable launcher is written in a platform independent programming language.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said platform independent programming language is Java.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said data further comprises an applet location, an applet identification information and an input data stream.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said host application is a web browser.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said API is a pluglet API which further comprises:

a pluglet factory interface wherein an instance of said plug-in can be instantiated by said host application;

a pluglet interface defining the requirements for a plug-in implementation; and

a pluglet stream listener interface enabling data transfer between said plug-in and said host application.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein said pluglet API uses a pluglet engine API to communicate with said host application and wherein said pluglet engine API allows said host application and said pluglet API to access a Java Virtual Machine (JVM).

12. The method of claim 11 wherein said pluglet engine API further comprises:

a pluglet manager interface enabling information be passed between said host application and said plug-in;

a pluglet peer interface defining compatibility requirements for host applications to run said plug-in;

5 a pluglet tag information interface wherein HTML tag information for said plug-in is provided; and

a pluglet stream information interface allowing said plug-in to access information on data streams sent to said plug-in.

10 13. The method of claim 1 wherein said integrating further comprises writing a manifest file for said plug-in.

14. A computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein configured to integrate a plug-in, said computer program product comprising:

15 computer readable code configured to cause a computer to incorporate an API in said plug-in, wherein said API enables said plug-in to be executed from a host application and data to be transmitted between said plug-in and said host application;

computer readable code configured to cause a computer to use said API to create a functional module wherein said functional module extends functionality of said host application;

20 and

computer readable code configured to cause a computer to integrate said plug-in into said host application.

15. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein said functional module is an executable launcher wherein said API allows said host application to launch executables via said executable launcher.

5 16. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein said executables are Java applets and JavaBean components.

17. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein said plug-in is written in a platform independent programming language.

10 18. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein said platform independent programming language is Java.

19. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein said executable launcher is written in a platform independent programming language.

20. The computer program product of claim 19 wherein said platform independent programming language is Java.

15 21. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein said data further comprises an applet location, an applet identification information and an input data stream.

22. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein said host application is a web browser.

23. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein said API is a pluglet API which further comprises:

a pluglet factory interface wherein an instance of said plug-in can be instantiated by said host application;

5 a pluglet interface defining the requirements for a plug-in implementation; and

a pluglet stream listener interface enabling data transfer between said plug-in and said host application.

24. The computer program product of claim 23 wherein said pluglet API uses a pluglet engine API to communicate with said host application and wherein said pluglet engine API allows said host application and said pluglet API to access a Java Virtual Machine (JVM).

25. The computer program product of claim 24 wherein said pluglet engine API further comprises:

a pluglet manager interface enabling information be passed between said host application and said plug-in;

15 a pluglet peer interface defining compatibility requirements for host applications to run said plug-in;

a pluglet tag information interface wherein HTML tag information for said plug-in is provided; and

a pluglet stream information interface allowing said plug-in to access information on data  
20 streams sent to said plug-in.

26. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein said computer readable code configured to cause a computer to integrate further comprises computer readable code configured to cause a computer to use a manifest file for said plug-in.

5 27. A apparatus comprising:  
an API configured to be incorporated in a plug-in, wherein said API enables said plug-in to be executed from a host application and data to be transmitted between said plug-in and said host application; and  
a functional module configured to be created using said API wherein said functional module extends functionality of said host application.

28. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said functional module is an executable launcher wherein said API allows said host application to launch executables via said executable launcher.

15 29. The apparatus of claim 28 wherein said executables are Java applets and JavaBean components.

30. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said plug-in is written in a platform independent programming language.

20 31. The apparatus of claim 30 wherein said platform independent programming language is Java.

32. The apparatus of claim 28 wherein said executable launcher is written in a platform independent programming language.

33. The apparatus of claim 32 wherein said platform independent programming language is Java.

34. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said data further comprises an applet location, an applet identification information and an input data stream.

35. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said host application is a web browser.

36. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said API is a pluglet API which further comprises:

a pluglet factory interface wherein an instance of said plug-in can be instantiated by said host application;

a pluglet interface defining the requirements for a plug-in implementation; and

a pluglet stream listener interface enabling data transfer between said plug-in and said host application.

37. The apparatus of claim 36 wherein said pluglet API uses a pluglet engine API to communicate with said host application and wherein said pluglet engine API allows said host application and said pluglet API to access a Java Virtual Machine (JVM).

38. The apparatus of claim 37 wherein said pluglet engine API further comprises:

a pluglet manager interface enabling information be passed between said host application and said plug-in;

a pluglet peer interface defining compatibility requirements for host applications to run

5 said plug-in;

a pluglet tag information interface wherein HTML tag information for said plug-in is provided; and

a pluglet stream information interface allowing said plug-in to access information on data streams sent to said plug-in.

10 39. The method of claim 27 wherein said plug-in further comprises a manifest file.